

Let's Talk About...

Botulinum toxin for spastic muscles

What is botulinum toxin and how does it work?

Botulinum toxin is a medicine that loosens muscles so they are not too tight. Usually, the doctor gives botulinum toxin shots with a small needle into the muscle. Botulinum toxin starts to help about 1–2 weeks after the shots are given and lasts for about 3 months.

What are the benefits of botulinum toxin injections?

Botulinum toxin treats spasticity. Spasticity is when muscles tighten more than they should. This makes it hard to do things like move, talk, or walk.

Loosening muscles with botulinum toxin can make your child more comfortable and help their muscles move better. Botulinum toxin works differently in each child, and the effects are temporary. It works best if your child also has other treatments, such as stretching or special positioning, or wears a splint or cast.

How will my child receive botulinum toxin?

Your child's doctor will inject botulinum toxin into the necessary muscles. Many children say they feel a sting or a pinch when they receive botulinum toxin. However, the muscles don't usually hurt after the shot. You can stay with your child during the procedure for comfort and support. Music, books, toys, and other distractions can make it less scary for your child.



Are there any risks or side effects from botulinum toxin?

Botulinum toxin is low risk. Even if a child receives botulinum toxin several times, the effects last about 3 months and they are not permanent. Side effects include:

- Bleeding or bruising at the shot site
- Weakness in the muscle where the shot was given
- Rash
- Flu-like symptoms

Seek medical attention right away if your child has trouble swallowing, talking, or breathing. You should also take your child to the doctor if other muscles away from the injection site are weak.

